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SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/PPC (PUCETTI), WHA/CAR (MCISAAC), G/TIP
(ETERNO, OWEN),

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PROJECT PROPOSAL - ANTI-TIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

REF: STATE 247994

1. SUMMARY. The Dominican Republic was placed on the Tier 2 Watchlist in the Department's 2004 TIP report. Among the principal shortcomings cited was that the government "lacks effective law enforcement" to combat TIP. The Embassy has consistently sought to increase the government's capacity to investigate and prosecute traffickers. However, despite improved leadership in the law enforcement agencies and the formation of anti-TIP units in the Attorney General's office, National Police, and Migration Directorate, efforts to improve the TIP-fighting capability of Dominican law enforcement have been hampered by a lack of interagency communication and cooperation. The Embassy's proposal is to bring together personnel from the several agencies responsible for investigating and prosecuting traffickers into a unified department under the direction of the Chief of Police and to integrate prosecutors from the Attorney General's office. This department will unite dedicated, vetted personnel and provide them with the resources to conduct thorough and productive investigations with the goal of arresting, prosecuting, and convicting traffickers in persons. END SUMMARY.

2. Per Reftel, Embassy submits the following proposal for an anti-trafficking grant to help the Dominican authorities create an interagency department to combat trafficking in persons.

A. Title of Project
Creating an Anti-Trafficking in Persons Department

B. Name of Recipient Organization/Government Agency
National Police of the Dominican Republic (in cooperation with the Attorney General)

C. Duration of Project
One year, with continued training and follow-up as necessary

D. Description

1. Objectives

This project will consolidate the anti-TIP units and resources of Dominican law enforcement agencies into a comprehensive anti-TIP department within the National Police. The Embassy will help identify and vet personnel from the Attorney General's office, Migration Directorate, National Police, Armed Forces and elsewhere to form a specialized anti-TIP entity that will be a separate department under the direction of the Chief of Police. (A "department" in this context would be equivalent to a U.S. police "division," such as a homicide division or robbery division.)

Through this grant, the Embassy will provide the anti-TIP department with the necessary resources, equipment, training, and technical advice to conduct criminal investigations and police operations with the goal of arresting, prosecuting, and convicting traffickers in persons. The objective is to help the Dominican Republic improve its TIP record and eventually receive a Tier I ranking in the annual Trafficking in Persons Report.

The principal Embassy sections that will be involved in the project include DHS/ICE, DAO (including the Coast Guard attach), FBI, NAS, and the Economic/Political Section. This proposal complements existing USAID projects to fight TIP, including training for judges and prosecutors; however, USAID will not be involved in the implementation of this project.

2. Activities

The program will provide Dominicans with the resources necessary to conduct an efficient and effective anti-TIP campaign along with the training needed to use the resources and to sustain the effort. Equipment necessary to achieve the project's objectives will include computers, office supplies, video cameras and other surveillance equipment, and vehicles. Members of the department will be vetted to insure its integrity. A prosecutor from the Attorney General's office will be integrated into the department to increase the number and effectiveness of TIP prosecutions.

3. Sustainability

The budget (see below) consists of funds for one-time purchases of equipment, building maintenance, and training.

The equipment will be chosen in part based on durability, and end-use monitoring will ensure that it is being used for its intended purpose and being maintained properly. The training will focus on creating a knowledge base sufficient to allow for internal training and skill development. Once set up properly, a coordinated anti-TIP department stands an excellent chance of becoming permanent and self-sustaining.

E. Justification

TIP is acknowledged as a significant problem in the Dominican Republic, which was named a Tier II Watchlist country in the 2004 TIP Report. According to the report, the Dominican Government "lacks effective law enforcement" to combat TIP. The Department's 2004 interim report, published in January, found that despite concerted efforts to improve, "there has been limited progress in prosecuting suspected alien smugglers and traffickers."

Estimates vary, but it is generally agreed that 20,000 - 40,000 children are engaged in child prostitution and tens of thousands of women and children have been trafficked from the Dominican Republic to other countries. In addition, thousands of Dominicans and third-country nationals are trafficked or attempt to migrate from the Dominican Republic to the United States by crossing the narrow passage between the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico in small fishing boats. This creates a direct threat to U.S. borders.

Following the election of a new government in May 2004, Dominican authorities have expressed a sincere desire to do more to combat trafficking in persons. The government has made several strong appointments that reflect a commitment to combat organized crime, including Attorney General Francisco Dominguez Brito and National Police Chief Manuel de Jesus Perez Sanchez, the former head of the police Institute for Human Rights. However, the Dominican Republic is only beginning to recover from a serious financial crisis, and the government lacks the resources to conduct a comprehensive, national anti-TIP effort. In addition, because the TIP problem in the Dominican Republic is widespread and varied, it is often difficult to identify TIP cases in the first instance and to determine which of several law enforcement agencies is responsible for investigating the cases that are identified.

Based on experience in working with Dominican authorities, the Embassy strongly believes that the best way to investigate TIP-related crime is to bring together trusted and vetted personnel from several different agencies with TIP-related law enforcement responsibilities into one coordinated anti-TIP department. The department will be under the leadership of the National Police Chief, in coordination with the Attorney General. The proposal is modeled on the successful National Directorate for the Control of Drugs (DNCD), which has made significant progress in the fight against controlled substances.

Given the nature of the current law enforcement environment, with separate anti-TIP units in the Attorney General's office, the National Police, and the Migration Directorate, the Embassy believes that the prosecution portion of the anti-TIP effort needs to be concentrated in a single department that has sufficient manpower and resources to conduct efficient and effective TIP investigations and prosecutions. For example, the National Police anti-TIP unit is currently a unit of the larger Falsifications Department. As such, it is consistently understaffed and lacks a coherent mission. A full department, headed by at least a colonel who reports directly to the Chief of Police, will eliminate unnecessary distractions and reduce bureaucratic inefficiency.

The proposed anti-TIP department will be comprised of personnel from the Attorney General's Office, Migration Directorate, National Police, Tourist Police, armed forces, and other agencies and departments as necessary. As with certain units in the DNCD, members of the coordinated anti-TIP department will be required to pass a polygraph. In addition to administrative staff, the office will include an intelligence team and an investigative team of approximately 10 officials from the law enforcement agencies. The department will also have at least one full-time prosecutor from the Attorney General's office, who will closely monitor and actively participate in the prosecution of TIP cases nationwide.

It is essential to locate the department away from the main centers of law enforcement, in order to segregate it from political pressures and unwanted intrusions, and to insure the integrity of the department and allow it to conduct its operations discreetly. An ideal location would be a detention center located within Santo Domingo that is currently used to hold immigration detainees. This facility could be converted to house the proposed department with a minimum of renovation and construction.

The Embassy will work in conjunction with trusted authorities to form the department, and the government will provide the

manpower and the physical space. The various U.S. Government agencies in Santo Domingo have excellent working relations with counterparts and are confident that U.S. concerns will be heeded. The grant will provide the coordinated anti-TIP department with investigative, research, and other resources necessary to conduct TIP investigations that will result in arrests, prosecutions, and convictions. Over the medium and long term, increased law enforcement activity will reduce trafficking in the Dominican Republic and make U.S. borders more secure.

F. Performance Indicators

The goal of the project is to enable a dedicated anti-TIP organization to identify, investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers in persons. Progress will be measured by the following indicators:

1. The successful establishment and organization of a coordinated, interagency anti-TIP department within the National Police;

2. An increase in the number of TIP investigations and the successful collection of usable evidence, including video surveillance;

3. More preventive detentions for accused traffickers, successful convictions using legally obtained evidence, and stricter penalties for convicted traffickers;

4. Permanent improvement in the Dominican Republic's TIP ranking in the annual Trafficking in Persons Report.

G. Evaluation Plan

The coordinated anti-TIP department will submit a quarterly report to the Embassy, detailing the number, nature, and progress of all TIP investigations and prosecutions. Members of the department will meet with the Embassy on an as-needed basis, but at least semi-annually, to discuss progress. The results will be evaluated in the annual TIP report and additional reporting as necessary.

The Embassy will provide end-use monitoring of donated equipment. The monitoring will be on a semi-annual basis for the first year, and annually every year thereafter.

**H. Budget Breakout
(x USD 1,000)**

Item	Cost
Renovation of office space	20
Telephones, furniture, utilities	5
Vehicles (3 SUVs)	100
Computers, faxes, copiers, etc...	10
Surveillance equipment	55
Vetting	15
Training (surveillance, use of equipment)	20
TOTAL	225

I. Type and Amount of Host Government Contribution, or Other Cost-sharing Agreement

The Dominican Republic will provide the personnel and salaries for the creation of the coordinated anti-TIP department, as well as a secure physical space. It will also provide any incidental expenses and pay for the upkeep of the donated equipment.

J. Proposed Funding Mechanism

Letter of Agreement between the Embassy and the Government of the Dominican Republic

K. Embassy Point of Contact

Embassy POC is Political Officer Jay Raman. He can be reached by email, ramanjr@state.gov, or by phone (office (809) 731-4203, cell (809) 696-2901).

L. Other Donors

None
HERTELL